



The Voice

616 S. Pine Ave
Ocala, FL 34471
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MARCH 2026

Step 3—"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him"

In this issue

The Quiet Voice.....	1
Little by Little.....	1
Announcement.....	2
Our Drinking Story	3
Announcements.....	4
Birthdays; Donations.....	5&6

MARCH 2026 | AA & THE FAMILY | STEP THREE

The Quiet Voice

BY: GARY K. | SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

I remember when I started working on the Steps, I was surprised when I got to Step Three. I was raised in a Christian home and did service at mass. The "God thing" was OK with me then. I did believe in God, but never looked at it as being my Higher Power. Instead, I began to realize that I was the Higher Power.

As alcohol took over, no one could tell me anything. It was my way or nothing. I just continued to get worse until I hit my bottom.

Then one awful day, right before I raised my gun to my head, I heard, "What are you doing?" Where did that voice come from?

As my sponsor and I worked the Steps and got to Step Three, I asked him, "If God loved me, why did he make me an alcoholic?" My sponsor replied, "Maybe that's the only way he could get to you." |

I know what that voice was today. It was God, the one who got me to the AA program and saved my life so I could help others.



Little by Little

BY: ANONYMOUS | TUCSON, ARIZONA

Getting sober is real. Real hard. When I got to AA, I was crazy. I had racing thoughts, homicidal thoughts, suicidal thoughts, every kind of unprincipled thought. I brought every member of my "committee" in my head with me to meetings.

Spiritually, I suppose I was an agnostic. I rejected the God idea and debated it with AA members every chance I got. Like a lot of us, I had resentments at God, mostly because I hated my own guts. I was pretty sure if there was a God, he, she or it hated me too.

Eventually, little by little in meetings I began to see, hear and feel God more frequently, expressed in everyday terms. I began seeing God consciousness in everything from parking spaces at the grocery store, to how many cows in a nearby field matched. Everything became a coinci-God moment.

But when the newness of sobriety wore off, and there wasn't a bunch of applause month after month, I honestly didn't know what to do. Responsibilities piled up as quick as the laundry and the bills. Suddenly it seemed as though the universe had conspired to not make me the center of it. People in my group now expected me to show up and help. What was I to do?

Start small, I told myself. I began to practice breathing in and out. I began sleeping, which was so much different than passing out. I began to have small spurts of gratitude for simple things, like hot and cold running water and a toothbrush. I became grateful for eating a decent meal that stayed down, and the fact that I didn't always sweat and turn red if someone looked at me. One day at a meeting someone smiled at me, and I actually saw it, because I wasn't staring at the floor.

Continued on p 2

Important Dates

March 8th —Noon

(always 2nd Sunday)

Intergroup/Central Office

Representative meet

Lost & Found

616 S. Pine Ave

March 26th-6:45pm

District 17

monthly meeting

Lost & Found Club

616 S. Pine Ave

Every Thursday Area 14

Service Workshop, 6pm

Hospitality, 5:45pm

New Topic every Thursday

Zoom Meeting ID:

828 5682 4762; pw: service

FAITHFUL FIVERS

Contribute \$5/month

or \$60/year

Contributors:

Joe S, Phil H,

Ralph W, Ginger H

Linda H, Stephanie D,

Casey P

Your membership directly

supports 12-Step work at

District 17 Central Office

GRAPEVINE Daily Quote

March 4, 2026

"We have to grow or else deteriorate. For us, the 'status quo' can only be for today, never for tomorrow. Change we must; we cannot stand still."

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., February 1961, "The Shape of Things to Come".
The Language of the Heart



Continued from p. 1

I was learning how to listen. Listening to my sponsor, my family and even my own children. I turned off the noise, the TV and the radio and listened. I began to listen to my inner self too, to my body and what it was telling me.

Unknown to me, my feeble attempt with Step Three—with my sponsor and me, the unbeliever—gave me the power to make decisions. Step Three is a decision. And timidly, reluctantly, I slowly began to believe that a Higher Power was in charge. Those coinci-God moments helped. Eventually I learned to pay attention to quiet cues as they came from within. The cues I'd been covering up for so many years with my drinking.

People suggested that if I wanted to develop a meaningful and personal relationship with God, it would most likely happen while in service to others. I'd mutter to myself "Oh, that's for saints." Every time difficulty came, it was suggested I put other people's well-being ahead of my own.

This program is all about continuing to make an effort to live a spiritual life and to put into actual practice the willingness we even half-heartedly expressed in Step Three. I'm no longer in a cartoon fistfight with willingness. Loss of willingness for me today is a warning. There's danger for me if I ever stop being willing to wash the tables, make and pour the coffee, say hello, make eye contact, or to actually be present in the meeting—spiritually, physically and emotionally present. I can't just sit there filling up a chair waiting to feel better. Or worse yet, thinking I have something important to say.

I'm learning to be willing to move forward through fear, forward into the unknown. As my old sponsor used to say, "We all know you're going to make mistakes, we'd just like you to make some new ones." Sponsors— they really are Jedi. When I'm tired, I've learned to pause. I listen to what my body has to say. When I have questions or doubt, my Higher Power answers, because I've slowed down enough to listen. Today I am a small part of the great "we." It's my responsibility, a debt I owe to Alcoholics Anonymous. Sobriety—it's not a spectator sport.

I hope to always hold "we" in the greatest of respect and highest regard. Literally everything I do today is in honor of what AA has done for me. As of today, the committee in my head has died down to only one or two members. Most of the time it's a committee of three—you, me and God, as I understand God.

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Living Grace Group 6th Annual Picnic

Join us for Fellowship, Food
& Fun in Nature!!

DATE: March 14th—2:00-5:00 PM
LOCATION—
Baseline Trailhead—Pavilion #1
Bring a Dish, Dessert or
Beverage to Share (not required)



THE RECOVERY HOUSE OF OCALA INVITES YOU TO OUR ANNUAL PICNIC

**JOIN US FOR FREE FOOD,
FUN AND FELLOWSHIP**

Saturday, March 28th, Noon-3pm
The Recovery House,





Tradition 3—"The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking."

MARCH 2026 | LONGTIMERS | TRADITION THREE

Our Drinking Story

BY: DAVID S | NEW YORK, NEW YORK

A woman shared at last night's AA meeting that her program of recovery required her to practice love and tolerance, and in the next breath lashed out at "bleeding deacons" and their lack of human decency. There was nothing of the bleeding deacon sort manifesting at the meeting, nor any evident lack of human decency. To be quite honest, I couldn't help but wonder if her venting was directed at me. We have had our differences in the past.

At my home group, where we were both present the previous night, a speaker had shared exclusively about his experience with drugs. We heard about his "using" but not about his drinking. I don't feel the need to apologize for expecting to hear about alcohol and alcoholism at an AA meeting, especially a closed meeting of my home group.

Following his lead, I raised my hand and said I had been part of the drug culture of the 1960s, but the next decade had seen alcohol assume primacy in my life. I added that early on in my AA recovery, a member with a drug history shared that in order to stay sober in AA, it is essential that we get in touch with our drinking story, a message I took to heart.

The following morning, I sent an email to my fellow group officers with a link to the Conference-approved AA pamphlet "Problems Other Than Alcohol." We hold our business meeting every month, and perhaps this matter of drugs will be part of the discussion.

In the meantime, I have been thinking about the woman who espoused love and tolerance and her scolding words for those who fall short. Assuming for the moment that she was in fact addressing me with her remarks, perhaps I did fall short. Perhaps it would have been more loving to talk with the speaker after the meeting rather than offer a public rebuttal, even if I was only sharing my experience, strength and hope. I could simply have held my tongue altogether.

And maybe I will be granted, in the future, more tolerance of those who speak solely from the point of view of dry goods in our AA meetings. Perhaps I'm one of those who too often, as Bill W. wrote, "view with alarm for the good of AA."

But love is not reserved solely for my fellow human beings. If we don't love this spiritual entity that one day at a time is saving our lives, who or what do we really love? And is it tolerance or is it indifference when we remain silent about extreme divergence from the singleness of purpose—alcohol, alcoholism and Alcoholics Anonymous—upon which the unity of AA rests? And, by the way, would it not be "common decency" to offer a degree of tolerance for even the most bleeding of deacons?

Many years ago, I sponsored a man who shared with me and the group from the point of view of drug use. Curious as to why he never mentioned alcohol, I asked him if he had ever taken a drink and, if he had, to perhaps share some of his drinking experiences with me and the group. Enraged, he fired me as his sponsor. And yet, some years later he thanked me for the question I had posed, as it challenged him to uncover his drinking story and enabled him to put down real roots in AA.

Well, this is my sober birthday month. I have been continuously sober for 43 years now, one day at a time. The little tempest has passed, and I can refocus on gratitude and be so thankful to know, with complete conviction, deep within me, that all the blessings that have come to me rest on staying away from the first drink one day at a time and trying to pass on this gift that I have freely received. Thank you, AA.

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GRAPEVINE Daily Quote

March 3, 2026

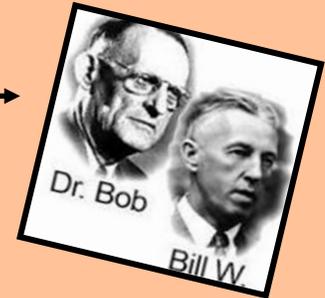
"Don't regret growing old, it's a privilege denied to many."

"Distilled Spirits," Tobyhanna

Pennsylvania, June 1995, AA Grapevine



Who met and what happened, so they could meet



A. A. History Presentation

Sunday, March 22, 2026—Noon—2:00pm

Refreshments provided—NO CHARGE

**DAV (Disabled American Veterans)
9636 SE 58th Ave, Belleview, FL**

***Help Mano Abierta Group
celebrate 24 years!!!***

Friday, April 11, 2026—7:00pm

St. John's Methodist Church

12390 W Hwy 328

Ocala, FL 34482



Bring your favorite dish!



Birthdays MARCH

Breakfast Club

Jenae R—8
Nikkie V—8
Jim B—19
Gary B—28
Patrick P—31
Annette M—41

Headstart

Al F—9
Mick H—18
Blenda—38
Living Sober
Jon V—1
N.Y. John S—29
Sue W—31
George N—38

ODAT

Jerry B—2
Francisco V—6
Kathy—6
Buzz—13
Patrick P—31
Billy D—32
Chris V—34
Steve K—36
Greg P—38
Carol B—39
John L—41

We Give Up

Linda H—25
Ray T—28
Carson—39

Contributions

FEBRUARY

11th Step Group	\$ 40.00
Anonymity	\$ 37.00
Friends of Bill	\$ 206.00
Happy, Joyous, & Free	\$ 186.24
Headstart	\$ 206.27
Living Sober	\$ 510.00
Mano Abierta	\$ 10.00
Sisters in Sobriety	\$ 15.00

Thank you for supporting your local
Intergroup/Central Office

Congrats!!!



*“There is freedom
waiting for you,
On the breezes of the
sky, And you ask
“What if I fall?”
Oh but my darling,
“What if you fly?”*

— Erin Hanson

From the GSO Pamphlet

*Self-support;
Where Money and Spiritually Mix (F-3)*

10% to District 17
P.O. Box 3081, Ocala, FL 34478

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**10% to Area 14 \*\*\*\*\***

NFAC Treasurer  
P.O. Box 840066  
St. Augustine, FL 32080  
*\*\*\*\*\* (Address changes every two years. Visit  
[www.aanorthflorida.org](http://www.aanorthflorida.org) for correct address)*

~~~~~  
30% to General Service Office
*PO Box 459, Grand Central Station,
New York, NY 10163*

~~~~~  
**50% to Central Office/Intergroup 17**  
*616 S Pine Avenue  
Ocala, FL 34471*